



Our Focus

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program, as part of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs utilize agents and assistants to provide educational opportunities for limited-resource individuals and families to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and change behaviors for improved health and well-being.

Our Challenge

Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2017, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$48,332**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$60,336**.¹ Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimate for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty	17.1%	13.4%
Child Poverty	22.1%	18.4%
Food Insecurity	14.7%	12.3%

In 2017, an estimated **4,365** Taylor County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **1,432** were children under 18.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.² These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke.



In 2017, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **34.3%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **34.4%**, ranking it as the most physically inactive state in the nation. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**12.9%**) and adults with hypertension (**39.4%**).³ A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.²

In 2015, **32.7%** of Taylor County's adult population were considered obese, and **31.2%** were considered physically inactive.⁴

Our Solution

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2019, 3,529 contacts were made with Taylor County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN TAYLOR COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 95% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 69% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 88% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 90% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 87% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. Blood glucose is the body's main source of energy and comes from a person's diet. Poorly controlled diabetes increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, nervous system disease, dental disease, amputations, and other problems. In Taylor County, 15% of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes (Kentucky, 13%). To address this issue, Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes was offered by the Extension office and a certified diabetes educator from the Taylor County Health Department. The curriculum included strategies such as goal setting and problem solving to empower individuals to manage their diabetes and to improve their quality of life. The program was offered as a four-week series in the fall of 2018. Following the program, an evaluation was collected to determine the results of the self-management program and found 43% were participating in regular physical activity, 40% were monitoring their blood glucose one or more times a day, 50% were planning meals to help with diabetes, and 67% felt they were in control of their diabetes.



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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. World Health Organization Media Centre
3. The State of Obesity Report 2019
4. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

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